

# Korean Broadcasting System

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**Korean Broadcasting System (KBS)** (**Hangul**: **한국방송공사**; **Hanja**: 韓國放送公社; **RR**: *Han-guk Bangsong Gongsa*; **MR**: *Han'guk Pangsong Kongsa*) is the national **public broadcaster** of **South Korea**. It was founded in 1927, and operates **radio**, **television**, and **online services**, being one of the biggest **South Korean television networks**.

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## Korean Broadcasting System (KBS)



Main building of Korean Broadcasting System

Native name	한국 방송공사
Hanja	韓國放送公社
Revised Romanization	<i>Han-guk Bangsong Gongsa</i>
McCune-Reischauer	<i>Han'guk Pangsong Kongsa</i>
Type	Public
Industry	Mass media
Predecessor	Kyeongseong Broadcasting Corporation
Founded	3 March 1973 (as Public Broadcasting organization)
Founder	Japanese Imperial Government
Headquarters	Yeouido, Yeongdeungpo-gu, Seoul, South Korea
Area served	National Worldwide (via KBS World)
Key people	Yang Sung-dong, President
Products	Television Radio Web portals
Owner	Independent (publicly owned)
Number of employees	5,294 (As of 1 January 2017)
Subsidiaries	KBS Media KBS Art Vision KBS Business KBS N KBS i (closed in 2011) E-KBS KBS America KBS Japan
Website	<a href="#">Corporation website</a>



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## History [\[edit\]](#)

### Beginnings in radio [\[edit\]](#)

KBS began as Kyeongseong Broadcasting Corporation (JODK, 경성방송국, 京城放送局) and was established by the **Governor-General of Korea** on 16 February 1927. This second radio station started using the call sign HLKA in 1947 after the **Republic of Korea** got the call sign HL of the **International Telecommunication Union**. After doing a national broadcast, the radio was renamed Seoul Central Broadcasting Station in 1948.

### 1950s-1960s - Move into television [\[edit\]](#)

Television broadcasts in South Korea began on 12 May 1956 with the first television station HLKZ-TV. It was sold to KBS in 1961.

### 1970s - Expansion [\[edit\]](#)

KBS station status changed from government to public broadcasting station on 3 March 1973. Construction of KBS headquarters in **Yeouido** started in 1976. In 1979, KBS radio began

broadcasting on the FM wave with the launch of KBS Stereo (now **KBS 1FM**).

KBS headquarters in Seoul



#### 1980s - Advertising started after controversial merger [\[ edit \]](#)

KBS began accepting advertising in 1980, differing from the norm of advert-free broadcasting by public broadcasters, after the forced merger of several private broadcasters into KBS by the military government of **Chun Doo-hwan** (see [Controversies](#)).<sup>[1]</sup>

#### 1990s - Spinoff of EBS [\[ edit \]](#)

In 1981, KBS launched KBS 3TV and Educational FM, and on 27 December 1990, the channels split from KBS to form the **Educational Broadcasting System (EBS)**.

After a revision of the television licensing fee system in 1994, KBS1 stopped broadcasting commercials.

#### Structure [\[ edit \]](#)

KBS is a public corporation (공사, 公社) funded by the **South Korean government** and license fees, but is managed independently. As part of the **Constitution**, the president of KBS is chosen by the **President of South Korea**, after being recommended by its board of directors. Political parties in South Korea also have the right to name members of the KBS board of directors.

Because of this system, which gives politicians effective control over choosing the president of KBS, as well as its board of directors, people who are critical of the system cite political intervention in KBS's governance as reason for revising the current system of recruiting.

Around 37.8% of KBS' revenue comes from a mandatory **television licence fee** of 2,200 **won**, with another 47.6% coming from commercial advertisement sales.<sup>[2]</sup>

KBS' international output such as **KBS World**, as well as specialised services such as KBS Radio 3 for the disabled, receive public funding from the **South Korean government**.



KBS Cool FM Radio studios



#### CEOs [\[ edit \]](#)

Generation	Name	Start	Retirement	Note
1	Hong Kyung-mo	February 1973	February 1979	N/A
2				
3	Choi Se-kyung	February 1979	July 1980	
4	Lee Won-hong	July 1980	February 1985	
5				
6	Park Hyun-tae	February 1985	August 1986	
7	Jung Koo-ho	August 1986	November 1988	
8	Seo Young-hoon	November 1988	March 1990	
9	Seo Ki-won	April 1990	March 1993	
10	Hong Doo-pyo	March 1993	April 1998	
11				
12	Park Kwon-sang	20 April 1998	10 March 2003	
13				
14	Seo Dong-koo	22 March 2003	2 April 2003	
15				Dismissed
16	Jung Yeon-joo	28 April 2003	11 August 2008	
17				N/A
18	Lee Byung-soon	28 August 2008	23 November 2009	
19	Kim In-kyoo	24 November 2009	23 November 2012	
20	Kil Hwan-young	23 November 2012	10 June 2014	Dismissed after strike
21	Jo Dae-hyun	28 July 2014	23 November 2015	N/A
22	Ko Dae-young	24 November 2015	January 2018	Dismissed after strike
23	Yang Sung-dong	6 April 2018	Incumbent	N/A



KBS regional broadcasting station in Changwon



#### Channels [\[ edit \]](#)

##### Terrestrial television [\[ edit \]](#)

- **KBS1** - KBS' flagship channel, it broadcasts news and current affairs, education, sports, and culture. It launched in 1961 as HLKA-TV and is solely funded by the license fee, airing commercial-free. It is available nationally on channel 9, broadcasting via [digital terrestrial television](#). KBS1 also airs public information films and minor entertainment programming, but the majority of which is on KBS2.<sup>[3]</sup>
- **KBS2** - KBS' entertainment and drama channel, it was launched in 1980 as a replacement for the [Tongyang Broadcasting Corporation](#), which was controversially merged with KBS. It is available on digital channel 7 via [digital terrestrial television](#). KBS2 also airs public information films and less

news and current affairs programming, but the majority of which is on KBS1.<sup>[3]</sup>

- KBS UHD - The Ultra High Definition channel. Airs music videos and re-runs of dramas. It is on national terrestrial digital channel 66.<sup>[4]</sup>

KBS1 and KBS2 phased out analogue services on 31 December 2012 as part of the switchover to digital television.

#### Cable and satellite television [ edit ]

- KBS Prime - A culture and drama channel, launched in 1995 as KBS Satellite 2. It was renamed as KBS Korea in 2002, before becoming Prime.
- KBS Drama - formerly KBS Sky Drama, launched in 2002
- KBS N Sports - formerly KBS Sports/KBS Sky Sports, launched in 2002
- KBS Joy - a comedy and quiz show channel that was launched in 2006
- KBS Kids - the children's channel, launched in 2012<sup>[5]</sup>
- KBS W - a channel aimed at a female audience, launched in 2013<sup>[6]</sup>
- **KBS - K Picture Media** - distribution paid cartoons online<sup>[3]</sup>

These six channels are carried by cable and satellite operators in South Korea. There are 100+ cable operators in South Korea, and **Skylife** is the sole satellite television service provider. These channels are managed and operated by KBS N, a subsidiary company of KBS.

#### KBS World [ edit ]

*Main article: KBS World*



KBS World is the international television and radio service of KBS. It officially launched on 1 July 2003. It is broadcast on a 24-hour schedule with programs including news, sports, television dramas, entertainment, and children's. KBS World television is broadcast locally and around the world. As of July 2007, around 65% of its programs are broadcast with English subtitles, it is available in 32 countries, and reportedly more than 40 million households around the world can access KBS World.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> It has two overseas subsidiaries: **KBS America** and **KBS Japan**. KBS Japan is independently operated by a KBS subsidiary in Japan, and most programs are provided with Japanese subtitles.

KBS World television is a television channel that mainly broadcasts programs commissioned for KBS' 2 terrestrial networks: KBS1 and KBS2. KBS World television is distributed over several international communication and broadcasting satellites such as IS-19, IS-20, IS-21, Measat 3, Apstar 6 & 7, **Eutelsat Hotbird 13A**, Galaxy 11, 18 & 23, **Badr 6**, **Vinasat 1**, **Palapa D**, **SES 7**, **Telkom 1**, **Thaicom 5**, **EchoStar 15**, **Anik F3**. Local cable and/or satellite operators receive the signal from one of these satellite and carry the signal to end subscribers of their own networks. KBS doesn't allow individual viewer to receive the signal from IS-19, IS-20, IS-21, Measat 3, **Asiasat 5**, and **Galaxy 18**. The signal from **Badr 6** and **Eutelsat Hotbird 13A** is **Free-to-Air**.

#### Radio [ edit ]

- **KBS Radio 1** (711 kHz AM/97.3 MHz FM KBS Radio Seoul) - news, current affairs, drama, documentary and culture. Launched in 1927 as Kyeongseong Broadcasting Corporation JODK and it became KBS Radio 1 in 1965.<sup>[7]</sup>
- **KBS Radio 2** (603 kHz AM/106.1 MHz FM KBS Happy FM) - Popular music. Launched in 1948 as HLSA.<sup>[7]</sup>
- **KBS Radio 3** (1134 kHz AM/104.9 MHz FM KBS Voice of Love FM) - Launched in 1980 and ceased broadcasting in 1981. It was later replaced by KBS Radio 2's regional radio service and Educational FM (now **EBS FM**). Later re-launched in 2000 as a spin-off from KBS Radio 2. For the first time in 2010, it was launched on **FM** and restructured as a radio station for the disabled.<sup>[7]</sup>
- **KBS 1FM** (93.1 MHz Classic FM) - classical music and folk music. Launched in 1979 as KBS Stereo, adopted current name in 1980.<sup>[7]</sup>
- **KBS 2FM** (89.1 MHz/DMB CH 12B Cool FM) - popular music. Launched in 1966 as Radio Seoul Broadcasting (RSB), renamed as TBC-FM in the 1970s, renamed as KBS Radio 4 in 1980 after TBC-FM forced merger to KBS, then adopted current name in 2003.<sup>[7]</sup>
- **KBS Hanminjok Radio** (literal meaning: KBS Korean Nationality Radio) (6015 MHz **shortwave** and 1170 kHz **mediumwave**) - launched in 1975 as KBS Third Programme<sup>[7]</sup>
- **KBS World Radio** - the South Korean international radio service, funded directly by the government.<sup>[7]</sup>

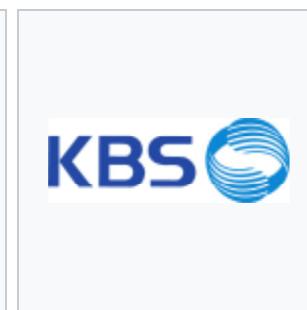
#### Branding [ edit ]



First KBS logo (from 1961 until 2 March 1973)



Second KBS logo (from 3 March 1973 until 1 October 1984)



Third and current KBS logo (2 October 1984 to present)



KBS text logo

## Programs [ edit ]

*Further information: [List of programmes broadcast by Korean Broadcasting System](#)*

## Foreign partners [ edit ]

Partner	Country
KBS World	Global
TV Pública	Argentina
ABC and SBS	Australia
VRT	Belgium
SBT	Brazil
MyTV and CTV8 HD	Cambodia
CBC	Canada
TVN	Chile
CCTV and Shenzhen TV	China
Caracol Televisión	Colombia
Ecuavisa	Ecuador
France Télévisions and TV5MONDE	France
ARD	Germany
TVB	Hong Kong
NET., RCTI, GTV and TVRI	Indonesia
RAI	Italy
NHK and TBS	Japan
TV3 and 8TV	Malaysia
Hulegu Pictures	Mongolia
NPO	Netherlands
TVNZ	New Zealand
Panamericana Televisión	Peru
ABS-CBN, GMA Network, PTV and Solar Entertainment	Philippines
TVP	Poland
RTP	Portugal
VGTRK and Channel One Russia	Russia
Mediacorp, StarHub TV and Singtel TV	Singapore
SVT	Sweden
TVE	Spain
CTV and TTV	Taiwan
MCOT, Channel 5 and NBT	Thailand
BBC	United Kingdom
ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC and PBS	United States
TVes	Venezuela
VT	Vietnam
Sony Pictures Networks	India

## Operational status [ edit ]

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### Headquarters [ edit ]

KBS passed the reorganization plan on 1 January 2017, after it was approved by the board of directors. The reorganization plan is to reform the existing six head offices and four center systems to one office, six head offices, two centers, and one operation division. The KBS reorganization plan is to completely reform the organization with a 'business center', including the newly established broadcasting headquarters.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● President</li><li>● Board of Directors</li><li>● Board of Directors Secretariat</li><li>● Vice president</li><li>● Human Resources office</li><li>● Human Resource Development Institute</li><li>● Deliberation office</li><li>● Foreign Cooperation office</li><li>● Innovation Promotion Team</li><li>● Announcer's office</li><li>● Labor Management Cooperation</li><li>● Audit</li><li>● Audit office</li><li>● Broadcasting head offices</li><li>● Organized marketing</li><li>● 1TV work</li><li>● 2TV work</li><li>● Radio work</li><li>● Advertising</li><li>● Video production</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Future Business head offices</li><li>● Dynamic Growth office</li><li>● Content work</li><li>● Digital services</li><li>● Infrastructure investment</li><li>● Future Technology Institute</li><li>● Reporting head offices</li><li>● Integrated news room</li><li>● Broadcasting office</li><li>● Digital office</li><li>● Coverage office</li><li>● International</li><li>● Sports</li><li>● Commentary</li><li>● News picture office</li><li>● Production head office</li><li>● TV program production office</li><li>● Radio center</li><li>● Drama head offices</li><li>● Drama Production office</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Network center</li><li>● Network facilities</li><li>● Network operation</li><li>● Namsan transmission center office</li><li>● Production Technology Division</li><li>● Audience head offices</li><li>● Viewer</li><li>● Management information</li><li>● Financial management</li><li>● Organization infrastructure</li><li>● Management support center</li><li>● Human Resource Management</li><li>● Planning office</li><li>● Future Planning office</li><li>● Investment Strategy office</li><li>● Broadcast Culture Institute</li></ul>
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### Controversies [ edit ]

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KBS being one of Korea's oldest broadcasters, also had controversies like **SBS** and **MBC**, but has more controversies than the two broadcasters, which has given them nicknames such as *Soonkyu Bangsong* and *The Department of Last Resort*.

#### 1980 – Forced merger of KBS with private broadcasters [ edit ]

During the **Chun Doo-hwan** regime of the eighties, the president passed a law to force several public broadcasters to merge with the public run KBS. After these broadcasters had shown news stories against Chun, he used this law to stifle their criticism of him. It included:

- **Tongyang Broadcasting Corporation** (TBC)
- **Donga Broadcasting System** (DBS)
- **Seohae Broadcasting Corporation** (SBC)
- **Jeonil Broadcasting Corporation** (VOC)
- **Hanguk-FM**

**Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation** (MBC) was also affected. MBC was originally a federation of 20 loosely affiliated member stations located in various parts of Korea. Although they shared much of their programming, each member station was privately owned. After the consolidation, however, each affiliate was forced to give up majority of their shares to the MBC based in Seoul, and MBC Seoul, in turn, was forced to give up majority of its shares to KBS.<sup>[8]</sup>

#### Consequences [ edit ]

- TBC television became **KBS2**, and TBC Radio became **KBS Radio 4** (now Cool FM/2FM).
- DBS became the now defunct **KBS Radio 5**. The frequency is now used by **SBS Love FM**.
- SBC became KBS Gunsan,<sup>[9]</sup> now known as KBS Radio 3 Jeonju.
- VOC became KBS Radio 3 Gwangju
- Hanguk-FM became KBS-Daegu-FM.

In 2009, president **Lee Myung-bak** said that the law was unconstitutional, and in 2011 TBC was revived as **JTBC**.

#### 2011 – Wiretapping scandal at TV license fee meeting [ edit ]

In 2011, Sohn Hak-kyu, the chairman of the opposition Democratic Party, accused KBS of wiretapping the party's closed-door meeting on TV subscription

charges.<sup>[10]</sup>

Sohn said, "We believe the firm bugged the meeting to secure information about our party's handling of the TV subscription policy. KBS should admit that it resorted to the deplorable method of gathering information."<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

The ruling Grand National Party initially sought to put a bill concerning the TV subscription charge to a vote, but failed to do so amid strong opposition from the Democrats.

The National Assembly's subcommittee on culture, tourism, broadcasting and communication, was scheduled to deliberate on 28 June 2011, but the meeting was cancelled due to the Democrats' protest.

The scandal erupted on 23 June when Han Sun-kyo, chairman of the parliamentary subcommittee, criticized the Democrats' opposition to increasing the TV subscription charge during a subcommittee meeting.

The GNP lawmakers eventually approved a bill raising the charge by 1,000 won to 3,500 won at a subcommittee meeting in the absence of Democrat lawmakers. That led to a Democrat boycott of a June extraordinary parliamentary session for half a day on 21 June 2011.

#### 2011 – Praising Chinilpa [edit]

Bak Han-yong (박한용), head of the Institute for Research in Collaborationist Activities, criticized KBS for censoring negative remarks from a documentary about Chinilpa individuals, and Rhee Syngman, who had pardoned them.<sup>[11]</sup> This includes the Chinilpa Paik Sun-yup.<sup>[12]</sup>

#### 2012 – KBS journalists strikes and *Reset KBS News 9* [edit]

The journalists working for KBS (along with MBC, SBS and YTN) have protested against the biased journalism practices that favor the Lee Myung-bak government.<sup>[13][14][15]</sup> The new union for KBS headed by Kim Hyeon-seok released a video clip "Reset KBS News 9" (리셋 KBS 뉴스9) on the internet that discusses the Prime Minister's Office Civilian Surveillance Incident and the controversial money-spending on renovating President Lee Myung-bak's alleged birth house on 13 March 2012.<sup>[16]</sup>

#### 2013 – Lee Soon-shin naming scandal [edit]

Global Youth League DN filed an injunction at Seoul Central District Court against broadcaster KBS for using the name "Lee Soon-shin" in the title of the drama. The injunction requested that the broadcast be halted immediately, that "Lee Soon-shin" be removed from the title and that the character name be changed. The group claimed that historical figure Lee Soon-shin (or Yi Sun-sin), an admiral famed for his victories against the Japanese Navy in the Imjin War during the Joseon Dynasty, is an official national symbol whose status will "deteriorate" when associated with the "weak and clumsy" protagonist that lead actress IU plays.<sup>[17][18][19][20]</sup> KBS and production company A Story responded that they had no plans of changing the title or character name. Instead, they altered the original drama poster where several cast members are sitting on a pile of 100 won coins that have an image of Admiral Yi, by digitally replacing the coins with a plain gold platform.<sup>[21][22]</sup>

#### 2014 – 1st KBS strike against pro-government bias of its president [edit]

In early May 2014, Gil Hwan-young removed the KBS news chief after alleged improper remarks over the sinking of the ferry Sewol. The chief then accused Gil of interference with news editing, with an alleged pro-government bias.

After the board postponed a decision on whether or not to dismiss Gil, two of the broadcaster's largest unions went on strike.

As a result of the boycott, most of the broadcaster's news output was affected. The hour-long KBS News 9 ran for just 20 minutes, and during local elections on 4 June 2014, KBS was unable to send reporters to interview candidates.

The strike ended after the board of directors voted to dismiss Gil. The board passed a motion on 5 June 2014 demanding the discharge of President Gil. The majority vote decision was sent to be approved by the country's president Park Geun-hye, who has the power to appoint the broadcaster's head.<sup>[23][24][25]</sup>

#### 2017 – 2nd KBS strike against pro-government bias of its president [edit]

On August 2017, KBS union decided to hold a strike, which was started on 4 September, due to allegedly influencing news coverage to be in favor of former president Park Geun-hye's administration.<sup>[26][27]</sup> As a result of the boycott, there has been a severe reduction in the airing of KBS news programs, culture programs, radio shows, and variety shows due to most staff members taking part in the strike.<sup>[28]</sup> After 141 days, the strike was over when the broadcasting company's board of directors approved the dismissal of KBS president Ko Dae-young.<sup>[29][30]</sup>

### See also [edit]

- [Educational Broadcasting System](#)
- [List of Korea-related topics](#)
- [KBS World Radio](#)
- [KBS World \(United States\) \(KBS America\)](#)
- [KBS World Canada](#)
- [List of South Korean broadcasting networks](#)
- [Korean Central Television \(equivalent in North Korea\)](#)



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## External links [ edit ]

- [KBS.co.kr](#) [\[5\]](#) - official KBS Website (in Korean) (in English)
- [KBS Onair](#) [\[5\]](#)
- [World.KBS.co.kr](#) [\[5\]](#) - official KBS World website (in Korean) (in Arabic) (in German) (in English) (in Spanish) (in French) (in Indonesian) (in Chinese) (in Japanese) (in Vietnamese) (in Russian)
- [KBS World News Today](#) [\[5\]](#)
- [KBS-America.com](#) [\[5\]](#) - official KBS America Website
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